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METAPHYSICS OF BUSINESS.

We hear much of various circumstances affecting business in this busy country, but few ever dream of its being liable to one influence, greater perhaps than all the rest put together—the workings of human nature.

A curious fact has been remarked, that the funds—all ordinary affecting circumstances being fully allowed for—always incline to be somewhat higher in spring than in autumn. There cannot, we think, be a doubt that this is owing to the various conditions of men's minds in the two seasons. In the opening of the year, there is an excitement of the hopeful and cheerful sentiments, under which we are more disposed to speculation and adventure. The decline of the year, on the contrary, raises melancholy and timorous sentiments; we then feel inclined to draw into our shells and wait for brighter days: speculation has no charms for us. In the one case we are under the influence of hope; in the other, of cautiousness. It would almost indeed appear as if we were, in this respect, subject to laws similar to those which affect birds and other lower animals, causing them to exhibit no active industry except in spring. It is only when we have a future bright before us, that our energies are fully roused.

The same feelings are seen exercising a most potent control over the state of markets, and in all adventurous kinds of business. These things are notably oscillatory; and this is simply because hope and cautiousness take command over us in an alternating manner. The natural procedure of the two feelings is this: for a time after an experience of evil or a threat of danger, cautiousness is predominant. Gradually, after a cessation of these experiences, we forget them. Cautiousness is lulled; hope and confidence again awaken; and these go on in increasing activity, till danger and evil once more supervene, and then they give way in a moment to revived cautiousness. Thus it is that, for some years after such a 'crash' as that of 1825, joint-stock speculations are held in universal dread; so that even a really promising one would be shunned. But by and by the sufferings and losses are forgotten. Men begin to touch and taste, and finding no immediate harm, they at length take whole mouthfuls. Hope gets into full commission, *viz* cautiousness retired, and then we see the most visionary schemes eagerly embraced, where recently the most plausible and prudent would have been repudiated. A 'crash,' with its distressing consequences in the ruin of individuals, and embarrassment of general business, finally lays hope once more so completely prostrate, that for years men cannot be induced to venture even on the fairest chances. The rise or fall of prices in all affairs admitting of the least speculation, is governed by the same principle. A little rise from just causes excites hope, under whose

influence a further and unwarranted rise takes place. While the progress in this direction remains unchecked by any external cause, all is sanguine expectation in the mercantile mind. No one seems to have the least conception of a possible reverse. Everybody wishes to buy from everybody. Reason has nothing to do with it: it is a mere sentiment which is at work. But let the slightest prognostic of a *turn* come into view, and in an instant the hopeful feeling sinks like a punctured wind-bag. A panic supervenes, and things never rest till they are as much below the fair and reasonable point as they were formerly above it.

Have we not here, also, nearly the whole philosophy of what are called 'gluts' and 'bad times?' Manufacturers go on for a while producing a particular article with the greatest diligence, as if they believed that mankind were in danger of some tremendous inconvenience for want of it. This enthusiasm in (we shall say) trouser stuffs finds at length a slight check. In an instant the manufacture ceases, the works are stopped, the workmen are thrown idle. For months there seems to reign over the district a dreary conviction that mankind are never to require trousers any more. Now it was neither true at first that mankind were in any pressing need of nether-garments, nor that they have now abandoned all further use of them. They use such abutments in a regular monotonous manner, and will evermore do so. The irregularity is in the mental impulses of the producers of trousers. These men happen to regard their wares with alternative paroxysms of hope and despair. The consequence is that at one time a factory is put to top speed, and the workmen are tempted by high wages to exceed the proper hours of labour, in order to produce a good deal more cloth than the public has immediate use for, while at another the whole system is laid utterly idle, because men somehow feel a heavy market as an indication that the world is at an end. Hence arise most important results in our social economy. A Leeds, a Manchester, a Sheffield, is every now and then a famine city, because business affairs are regulated, not by the sense and judgment of mankind, but by mere sentiments not necessarily connected with reflection. How absurd to suppose business men to be prosaic and over-sober of mind! They are the greatest sentimentalists that breathe.

We must now consider another portion of our subject.

Accustomed as we are in this country to see almost every person engaged in some kind of business or craft, we are apt to suppose it the natural and ordinary state of things. A twelve hours' bill seems the general fate of man. But in reality constant working is the exception from the rule. There are very few nations which pursue regular callings continually. Some that are by no means uncivilised work extremely little.

The Turks, for example, are an indolent people. Powerless, handless, they spend the whole day in perfect vacuity, apparently never giving themselves the least concern about the means of subsistence. And yet, somehow, the Turks live. All the people along the south of Europe are comparatively inert. The *Dolce Far Niente* is the prevalent taste of the Mediterranean nations. The striking distinction of the Englishman in this respect seems to be in a certain anxiety about the welfare of himself and his family. He starts in life with an awful sense of the necessity of getting on in the world. He will, with the greatest coolness, commence a business which he knows will require his being a daily and nightly slave for thirty years, undreaming that he is making any extraordinary sacrifice. He sees ages of bill-troubles before him, but looks upon it all as a matter of relentless destiny. Even when the first claims of his sense of duty have been fulfilled, and he knows he is safe from poverty for life, he works on for the love of working, rather than walk into a system of idleness which would present to him no enjoyable advantages. Now, who ever heard, in the literature or history of any nations away from central Europe and the United States of America, of such a thought predominating among them as the necessity of getting on in the world? They are not, in general, altogether idle. They till, and weave, and fabricate in a way which seems to be sufficient for their wants; but they are totally unacquainted with that system of close and incessant mulling after increase of goods, which appears to be the first law of existence amongst us. It must also be remembered that we know of the world having existed for centuries upon centuries, before it exhibited *anywhere* an example of this passionate attachment to workshop, counter, and desk. There was no shopkeeping worth speaking of in ancient Greece or Rome. Factories existed not among the Ptolemies. While the crusades swept across Europe, there were few men calling themselves merchants in London, Paris, or Venice. It is entirely since the close of the middle ages that men have raised into vogue the idea that business is the sheet-anchor of individuals and of nations. There is thus a great difference from past time to present, as well as from other nations to us. This shows fully, we think, that business is not a thing necessary or unavoidable to our human nature. It can be no special result of certain faculties which have no other purpose or mode of action. Yet this is what we might suppose, if we were to see nothing in business but the gratification of the working or fabricating faculty, and of the love of gain. It therefore appears that the love of action and of excitement, or what Dr Darwin would have called 'an accumulation of sensorial power,' is what chiefly animates the hard-working nations, being the same impulse which once gratified men in war and in the chase, and still leads the born wealthy to the turf and the gaming-club. It is but the phase in which the mass of manly power and endowment appears in modern civilised nations. And accordingly trade has its heroes and conquerors as well as history. We shall find on many an 'exchange' combinations and calculations profounder than any that ever emerged in St James's or Versailles; and it would not be difficult for any one acquainted with such towns as Glasgow or Liverpool to point out men between whom and a Napoleon it is not easy to see any distinguishing qualities besides their superior worth.

The view which we are disposed to take respecting the benevolence of business accords with this idea as to their main ends being, after all, but the gratification of certain mental faculties. To appearance there is nothing but selfishness regarded in business, and if the pursuit of his own end by each individual conduces, as

Adam Smith endeavours to show, to the general weal, it is no praise to the motives of particular parties. But the worship of fortune in reality involves no necessary subjection of the heart to selfishness. The fact is, that where business exists on a considerable scale, its votaries act under two opposite and apparently irreconcilable principles: in purely business matters, they are keen and inflexible, ever disposed to exact the whole of their rights; in domestic and social matters, they may be at the same time bountiful and conceding to a surprising degree. Meet them upon a bargain, and you would think them stern, and wrapped up in views of their own interest. See them next day in private, and you discover that they use their wealth with a generosity that shows they are far from loving it for its own sake. We have here a consideration which seems to take much from the force of those writings which hold up the present as an age of Mammon-worship. The following of Mammon is a fact in itself; but it ought to be taken in connexion with other circumstances, by which its effects are much modified. Our ruling competitive principle unquestionably calls out emulation and worse passions; but these are softened by the humanity and largeness of soul which are conspicuous features of the mercantile mind in all above the struggling classes. We are not, let it be fully understood, inclined to believe that the present plan is the best conceivable for the subsistence of nations. We thoroughly believe that, in time, such great bodies of people will feel and act more as only a large kind of families, and enjoy almost, if not altogether, in common the fruits of the general industry, finding that thereby they realise greater enjoyments than are to be obtained by each standing upon his individual acquisitiveness. All this may be unhesitatingly admitted, and yet we will say that the present system is far less selfish than is generally supposed, seeing that selfishness is the rule only in a certain routine of transactions so monotonous as almost to be a complete abstraction, while the kindly social affections in reality prevail over, and give character to the ordinary demonstrations of the individual.

We have here merely broken ground in a subject which appears to us to possess great interest. We willingly leave to others to investigate it more deeply, and place the matter in all the various lights in which it may be contemplated. Meanwhile, some of these speculations may be brought home to men's bosoms. It is very obvious that the interests of a vast body of people—of that class generally who live by labour—are involved to a serious extent in the briskness and dullness of business. It is of importance for them to be aware that, so long as the competitive mode endures, the amount of their incomes, and even the question whether they shall have an income at all or not, depend upon the extent to which the faculty of hope is active in the brains of the employing class. So long as employers are sanguine as to markets and results of mercantile combinations, the horde of the industrious are safe; let the tide turn—and its ebb is as sure as its flow—and a large proportion of this huge multitude must cease to be employed. The fact of hundreds of thousands of our people being thus withheld at any time from a penury verging upon and often trenching upon pauperism, only by the afflatus of an accidental sentiment in the minds of another portion of the community, is one of those great problems of modern times at which the wisest are the most apt to stand aghast. It is surely by no means creditable to our national sagacity, that we should contentedly see times of prosperity thus go on to the inevitable break-down, when thousands upon thousands are sure to be thrown into misery, and yet believe it all to be in the fair and proper course of things. No provision by the industrious themselves for the day of certain evil; no arrangement by the sage and politic for softening the blow when it comes; no lesson for the future taken from the past; and, above all, no whispered alarm into any mind as to the soundness of the social

plans which involve such tremendous calamities. Verily, we are yet children acting upon our first instincts, and the manhood of man—the time of reason and true brotherly kindness—seems yet far off.

HISTORY OF A NEGRO PLOT.

MANKIND always fear those whom they oppress, and desirous of finding an excuse for their oppression, they are never slack in accusing the injured of a disposition to conspire and revolt. History abounds in instances of this species of injustice. Every country in Europe has had its *plots*, not one in a hundred of which rested on any other foundation than the real or pretended fears of the oppressing party. So also have all slave-holding countries their plots—mere figments of the imagination, but which are nevertheless made the plausible ground for renewed restrictions on the unhappy objects of oppression.

We propose to shame human nature with an account of one of these fabulous plots, and the cruelties of which it was made the pretence.

Slavery was a legal institution in the North American colonies previous to their declaration of independence; no one either at home or abroad thinking there was anything wrong in dealing in negroes as articles of merchandise, or in subjecting them to perpetual bondage. From the government in Britain the colonial governors had strict injunctions to cultivate the African trade, as it was called, and to take care that the negroes who were imported should be properly watched, lest they should commit the odious and ungrateful crime of seeking to emancipate themselves by violence. It was not necessary to give any such injunctions, for the colonists were so much alive to the necessity for checking an inclination to revolt, that, like all oppressors, they were continually imagining outbreaks, and taking the sharpest measures to prevent their occurrence. In the year 1741, a panic cry of negro revolt was raised in New York, which threw the inhabitants of that city into a state of great excitement and alarm; the rumour being that the negro population designed to burn the town and massacre every white inhabitant. This insane idea originated in the following circumstances.

A Spanish vessel had been brought into port as a prize, and a number of its sailors being men of colour, they were not treated as prisoners of war, but condemned as slaves in the court of admiralty, and accordingly sold to the highest bidder. These unfortunate men grumbled at this treatment. They declared they were freemen, who had hired themselves as mariners, and that it was grossly unjust to make them slaves. Of course these arguments went for nothing; the men had black or tawny skins, and by the colonial law they were liable to confiscation. One of these men was bought by a person whose house shortly after went on fire; immediately two or three other fires occurred in the city, including one in the government house, which was burnt with some adjoining buildings. Whether these fires were accidental, or the work of incendiaries, could not be discovered; but the cry was raised among the people, 'It is the Spanish negroes!—take up the Spanish negroes!' They were immediately incarcerated, and a fire occurring in the afternoon of the same day, the rumour became general that the slaves in a body were concerned in these wicked attempts to burn the city. The military was turned out, and the sentries were posted in every part of the town, while there was a general search of the houses, and an examination of suspicious persons. The lieutenant-governor, at the request of the city authorities, offered a reward of £100 and a full pardon to any free white person who should discover the persons concerned in these incendiary acts,

and freedom, with a reward of £20, to any slave who should make the same discovery.

The offer of so tempting a reward induced a woman named Mary Burton to assume the office of informer. Some time before the outbreak of the fires, Mary had been a servant with a person named John Hughson, who kept a low tavern where negroes were in the habit of resorting. This man had been concerned in receiving some articles of which a house had been robbed, and in consequence of information given by his servant, he was seized and put in prison for this delinquency. Peggy Carey, a woman of infamous character, was also implicated in the robbery, and likewise committed to prison. It now seems to have occurred to Mary Burton that nothing would be more feasible than to attach the crime of incendiarism and insurrection to her late master, Hughson, and the woman Carey, along with three negroes, Cæsar, Prince, and Cuffee, and she emitted a declaration to that effect. She stated that she had heard these two white and three black persons conspiring to burn the town and massacre the inhabitants. The governor, the lawyers, and all the people were agast with horror. The plot was atrocious, and demanded the most careful inquiry, the most signal punishment.

Many examinations ensued, and among others that of the wretched woman Peggy Carey. Peggy was bad enough, but she had never entertained half so magnificent a project as that of burning New York, and denied all knowledge of the plot and its abettors. On second thoughts, however, as she saw she was in a scrape for having received stolen goods, it appeared to her that she might escape punishment by trumping up what was so much in demand—a little knowledge of the plot. She now made a voluntary confession, in which she laid the scene of the plot in the house of John Romme, a shoemaker, and keeper of a tavern frequented by several negroes, to whom Romme administered an oath. She said they were to attempt to burn the city; but if they did not succeed, they were to steal all they could, and he was to carry them to a strange country and give them their liberty. All the slaves mentioned by her were immediately arrested: Romme absconded, but was afterwards taken.

The narrative of what now took place may be best gathered from the 'American Criminal Trials,' by P. W. Chandler, a work of much interest, recently published.

'On the 29th of May 1741, the negro slaves, Quack and Cuffee, were brought to trial before the supreme court, on a charge of a conspiracy to murder the inhabitants of the city of New York. The principal evidence against them came from Mary Burton. There was also some evidence against them from negroes. The prisoners had no counsel, while the attorney-general, assisted by two members of the bar, appeared against them. The evidence had little consistency, and was extremely loose and general. The arguments of the lawyers were chiefly declamatory respecting the horrible plot, of the existence of which, however, no sufficient evidence was introduced. "The monstrous ingratitude of this black tribe," was the language of one of them, in addressing the jury, "is what exceedingly aggravates their guilt. Their slavery among us is generally softened with great indulgence. They live without care; and are commonly better clothed and fed, and put to less labour, than the poor of most Christian countries. But notwithstanding all the kindness and tenderness with which they have been treated amongst us, yet this is the second attempt of the same kind that this brutish and bloody species of mankind have made within one age." The prisoners were immediately convicted, and were sentenced by one of the court, in an address singularly indicative of the general excitement on the subject, to be burnt to death. "You that were for destroying us without mercy," he said, "you abject wretches, the outcasts of the nations of the earth, are treated here with tenderness and humanity; and I wish I

could not say with too great indulgence, for you have grown wanton with excess of liberty, and your idleness has proved your ruin, having given you the opportunities of forming this villainous and detestable conspiracy. What hopes can you have of mercy in the other world, for shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" and he urged them to confess, as affording the only hope of mercy. *Jun zhou hoo hoo suowit do not a sail*

"The prisoners protested their innocence, and utterly denied any knowledge of any plot whatever; but when they were taken out to execution, the poor creatures were much terrified; the officers again endeavoured to persuade them to confess, and after they were chained to the stake, and the executioner was ready to apply the torch, they admitted all that was required of them. An attempt was then made to procure a reprieve; but a great multitude had assembled to witness the executions, and the excitement was so great that it was considered impossible to return the prisoners to jail. They were accordingly burned at the stake. Although Hughson and his wife had already been tried, and were under sentence of death for the felony of receiving stolen goods, it was determined to bring them to another trial for being concerned in the conspiracy. Accordingly, on the 4th of June 1741, Hughson, his wife, his daughter, and Peggy Carey, were placed at the bar for trial. Mary Burton was at hand with her tales, and Arthur Price, a thief and an infamous character, who had been employed by the magistrates to go to Sarah Hughson and endeavour to make her accuse her father and mother, related a conversation he pretended to have had with her. "The prisoners had no counsel, and almost every member of the bar appeared against them." The attorney-general made an address to the jury, which was full of outrageous invectives against Hughson. "Such a monster," he said, "will this Hughson appear before you, that, for the sake of the plunder he expected by setting in flames the king's house, and this whole city, he—remorseless he! counselled and encouraged the committing of all these most astonishing deeds of darkness, cruelty, and inhumanity—infamous Hughson! Gentlemen, this is that Hughson, whose name and most detestable conspiracies will no doubt be had in everlasting remembrance, to his eternal reproach, and stand recorded to the latest posterity. This is the man!—this, that grand incendiary!—that arch rebel against God, his king, and his country!—that devil incarnate, and chief agent of the Abaddon of the infernal pit and regions of darkness!"

"The prisoners severally and solemnly protested their innocence, declared that what the witnesses had said against them was false, and called upon God to witness their asseverations. They were all found guilty, and were sentenced to be hanged. "Good God!" exclaimed the judge in pronouncing sentence, "when I reflect on the disorders, confusion, desolation, and havoc which the effect of your most wicked, most detestable, and diabolical counsels might have produced, had not the hand of our great and good God interposed, it shocks me; and you, who would have burnt and destroyed without mercy, ought to be served in a like manner." *at oollic he was saved, brought a to blason*

"The daughter of Hughson confessed and was saved. Peggy Carey had confessed, but retracted, and said that what she had confessed was a gross perversion, and that she had sworn falsely against those she accused. She was accordingly executed. On the evening before her death, she sent for one of the judges, and reiterated to him her statement that she had forsworn herself in regard to the plot. Hughson and his wife asserted their innocence to the last, but were executed. When the three came to die, Hughson seemed to expect a rescue; his wife was senseless; and Peggy Carey met her fate with less composure than either of the others. *trials and*

Meanwhile, the trials were prosecuted with all possible vigour. On the 8th of June, six negroes were condemned to be chained to a stake and burned. On the 10th of June four more negroes were tried, convicted, and

subsequently received the same sentence; one of them immediately made a confession in court, implicating a large number of negroes. On the 13th of June five more were convicted, and on the 15th of the same month were sentenced to death. On the 17th of June five of the Spanish negroes were brought to trial. By a law of the province, the testimony of slaves could only be used against each other, and it was used in the present instance; but the prisoners complained bitterly of the injustice done them, insisting that they were freemen in their own country. The court decided, however, that they were slaves, and the evidence of slaves was properly used against them; they were all condemned. On the 19th of June the lieutenant-governor offered a full pardon to all who would make confession before the 1st of July. The poor negroes, being extremely terrified, were anxious to take the only avenue of safety that was offered, and each strove to tell a story as ingenious and horrible as he could manufacture. "Now," says the historian of the plot, "many negroes began to squeak, in order to lay hold of the benefit of the proclamation. Some who had been apprehended, but not indicted, and many who had been indicted and arraigned, who had pleaded not guilty, were disposed to retract their pleas and plead guilty, and throw themselves on the mercy of the court." In one week after the proclamation there were thirty additional slaves accused, and before the 15th of July forty-six negroes, on their arraignment at different times, pleaded guilty. Suspected slaves were daily arrested, until at length the prison became so full that there was danger of disease, and the court again called in the assistance of the members of the bar, who agreed to bear their respective shares in the fatigue of the several prosecutions. *several to condemn to jail*

While things were at this crisis, the cry of a negro plot became strangely mingled with a notion that the conspiracy was somehow fomented by the Roman Catholics—a Negro and Popish plot rolled into one—and this greatly aggravated the panic. Mary Burton, and William Kane, a soldier, who had himself been suspected, and escaped by confession, accused a nonjuring clergyman, named John Ury, who was living obscurely in New York; of meeting and conspiring with negroes. Nothing was too wild for belief. This poor gentleman, whose life appears to have been irreproachable, was brought to trial for the double offence of being a conspirator and a Roman Catholic priest. He pointedly denied both charges. He declared he was not a Roman Catholic, and we are led to infer from his defence, that he was one of those Scottish Episcopal clergymen, who, from conscientious motives, would not subscribe to the revolution settlement. The court, however, would give no credence to this acknowledgment; it held, contrary to all evidence, that he was a Roman Catholic priest; and according to the logic of the day, that was enough in itself to condemn him. When brought to the scaffold, he delivered a most affecting and pious address, solemnly denying all knowledge of the plot, and that he was even acquainted with Hughson, his wife, or the creature who was hanged with them. After the execution of this unfortunate man, a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God was observed by public command, for the deliverance of his majesty's subjects here from the destruction wherewith they were so generally threatened by the late execrable conspiracy. The delusion continued a short time longer, and there was one more execution; but the public vengeance had been pretty well satiated, and prosecutions became unpopular, more especially as Mary Burton, the common informer, began to give out intimations against people of consequence in the city. The last act of the tragedy was the payment of this perjured creature, by the city authorities of the reward of £100, originally offered to any one who would disclose the plot.

To sum up the cruelties perpetrated during the excitement: the number of persons taken into custody on suspicion was upwards of one hundred and fifty. Of these, four white persons were hanged; eleven negroes were

burnt; eighteen were hanged; and fifty were transported and sold, principally in the West Indies. Several persons who were suspected made their escape out of the colony. And all this, to the disgrace of the age, on no other ground than an idle public clamour. The whole, from first to last, had been an imposture and delusion.

POPULAR INFORMATION ON SCIENCE.

REPRODUCTION OF PLANTS.

THE main object of a plant during growth seems to be the reproduction of its kind. Whether the term of its existence be limited by a day, by a year, or by centuries, its sole effort—as it proceeds from leaf to stem, from stem to branch, and from branch to flower and fruit—is the multiplication of itself. This is effected variously: by seeds, by spores or germs, by tubers, by runners, which put forth shoots as they elongate, by branches which send down roots, by slips or detached branches, or even by single leaves. We shall notice the more remarkable of these modes, as exhibiting at once the perfection of design, and the inexhaustible contrivances which nature has ever at her adoption for the accomplishment of the end in view.

Increase by seed is the most familiar mode of reproduction, being common to all flowering plants. Seeds are merely leaves preserved in peculiar ocrements till the return of the season of growth. And here it may be remarked, that wherever we have a healthy-growing leaf, or number of leaves, there is no difficulty in rearing an independent plant, since, according to the doctrines of morphology, the leaf is the primary organ from which all other parts take their form and development. A numerous class of vegetables have their seeds composed of two leaves or lobes, as may be seen in the bean and apple; in another class, as the oat and cocoa-nut, they consist of a single lobe. But whether they have one or two lobes, in all of them the function of reproduction is of the most perfect description. To produce a fertile seed, the pollen or dusty granules which tip the stigmas must be conveyed to the pistil, and through the pistil to the embryo in the ovary. For this purpose a thousand beautiful adaptations have been called into existence. These precious granules, liable to be swept away by every breeze and shower, are protected by the sheltering calyx and corolla, which turn their backs to the wind, or droop like a pent-house to ward off the rain. And even should the pollen be scattered by accident, the pistil is covered with a fine mucilage, which intercepts and retains it in spite of every antagonist force. Some plants have the stamens and pistils in one and the same flower; in others the stigmas are in one flower and the pistil in another; while in not a few the male and female flowers are produced on separate stems—yet in all, the means of fertilisation are seldom rendered nugatory. If the male and female flowers are near, they are placed so as to be brought in contact by the slightest waving of a branch; or if distant, the passing breeze and the limba of the wandering bee are the agents by which the pollen is carried to the destined receptacle. When properly matured, a seed must be provided, first, with the means of dispersion and preservation; and secondly, with a sufficiency of internal nourishment for the embryonic plant, till its roots have struck into the soil, and its leaves have expanded in the atmosphere. Accordingly, some seeds are farinaceous, others albuminous, and many oleaginous—all of these products being converted, during germination, into those elements which enter into the structure of a growing plant. For

the conversion of these products, a certain amount of heat and moisture is necessary; but too much heat would parch them, and too much cold or moisture would destroy their vitality. To provide against such contingencies, nature has conferred on the seeds of plants the most ingenious and perfect coverings. The cocoa has a tough fibrous coat and woody nut, impervious alike to drought and rain; the chestnut has a compact leathery envelope; the plum a hard stony drupe; the apple a fleshy pome, enclosing leathery cells; the rose a fleshy hip, packed with down; the pea and bean a pod of parchment; and seeds apparently naked have either a coriaceous membrane, or have the exterior tissue so condensed, that they look as if they had come from the hand of the janniper. Thus, the protection against cold, drought, moisture, and other destructive agencies is so complete, that seeds which have been buried for centuries have, on being brought to the surface, sprung up into healthy plants; even a crop of wheat has been reared from grain found in the case of an Egyptian mummy more than three thousand years old.

Equally perfect with this protection is the means for their dispersion over the surface of the globe. What could be better adapted for floating from island to island than the cocoa-nut, with its light, waterproof, fibrous coat and woody shell? What more easily caught up by the slightest breath of air than the seeds of the thistle or dandelion, with their little parachutes of down? Or what more aptly fitted for attachment to the coats of wandering animals than the hooked heads of the teasel and burdock? Nor does contrivance end here. Many, when ripe, are ejected from the vessels which contain them with considerable force by means of elastic valves and springs. The cardamine impatiens throws its ripe seed to a considerable distance on being touched; so does the squirting cucumber, the geranium, the common broom, and others, as if they were endowed with vitality, and had a care for their embryonic progeny. Some do not even part with their seeds till these have struck root as independent plants. Thus the mangrove, which flourishes amid the mud of tropical deltas and creeks, retains its berries till they have sent down long thread-like radicles into the silt below, as if it felt that the water and slime by which it was surrounded were elements too unstable to be intrusted with its offspring.

Plants that reproduce themselves by spores or germs belong to the cryptogamic or flowerless class of vegetation, as the ferns, sea-weeds, mosses, and mushrooms. In many of these the reproductive spores are so minute, that they float in the air unseen; and not a dried mushroom or puff-ball that is struck by the wandering foot, but disperses thousands of its kind around it. The little brown specks on the leaf of the fern, the snuff-like powder of the puff-ball, or the dust arising from the mould of a decayed cheese, are all alike the germs of future plants; and when we consider how minute each individual is, how liable to be borne about by winds, by water, and by the coverings of animals, to which they may adhere, we shall cease to wonder at the fact, that there is not a portion of surface, organic or inorganic, that may not be covered with their growth. The spores of the fungi or sea-weeds, which are always surrounded by water, are covered with a mucilage that enables them to adhere to whatever solid body they touch; and, what is peculiar in this adhesive substance, it is insoluble in water. Let chemistry, says Macculloch, in his *Illustrations of the Attributes of a God*, name another mucilage, another substance, which water cannot dissolve, though apparently already in solution with water, and then ask if this extraordinary secretion was not designed for the special end attained? and whether,

also, it does not afford an example of that Power which has only to will that it may produce what it desires, even by means the most improbable?

Many plants, as the potato, reproduce themselves both by seeds and tubers. Both modes, however, do not take place with equal exuberance at one and the same time. In its native region of South America, where the climate is better adapted for blossom and maturation of seed, the potato flowers luxuriantly, but yields an insignificant crop of small acrid tubers; in our unstable climate, on the other hand, the underground progeny is the more abundant and prolific. Acting upon the knowledge of this principle, the farmer in Europe cuts off the flower-buds of the potato-plant to increase his crop of tubers; just as the tulip or hyacinth-fancier prevents his plants from flowering, in order to increase the stock of his bulbs, which throw out a number of offsets from their bases. There is, it would seem, a certain amount of vital force in every plant, and if that force be expended on flowering, tubers will not be produced, and if on the production of an underground progeny, the seed will not be matured, as is the case with the horse-radish and Jerusalem artichoke. Here, however, it must be remarked, that tubers are not roots in the botanical sense of the word; they are true underground stems, which, instead of terminating in fruit and seed, terminate in nodes full of eyes or leaf-buds, and supplied with a quantity of farinaceous matter for the support of the young buds, till they have struck their roots in the soil sufficient to elaborate their own sustenance. Let any one unearth a potato plant with care, and he will at once perceive the difference between the true roots spreading out into minute fibres, and the underground stems terminating in tubers. The former are tough and fibrous, diverging into minute radicles, each tipped with its little sucking point or spongiole; the latter are soft and succulent, undivided, and ending in a mass of farinaceous matter studded with young buds. Each of these buds, if detached with a portion of the tuber, and placed in proper soil, will spring up into a perfect plant—the farinaceous fragment supplying it with food, until roots and leaves are formed.

The manner in which plants reproduce themselves *vicariously* differs according to the constitutional character of the individual. Some, as the elm and poplar, have their roots furnished with buds, which sooner or later sprout forth into offsets and suckers, as they are called, and these annually increase in bulk and height—ultimately becoming, under proper conditions, perfect trees. Others, as the greater number of bulbs and tubers, multiply themselves by sending out runners, each of which produce several young plants; and herbaceous perennials extend themselves in the same way, either by runners under ground, as the couch-grass, or above ground, as the strawberry. Most people must have observed the continual efforts of the latter plant to extend itself in this way; and so it is with many others—the propensity being most powerful where there is the least opportunity of bringing forth seed. It is often highly interesting to watch the progress of these runners. Where the soil is soft and favourable throughout, the young shoots are developed at about equal distances; but where the soil is hard, or covered with stones, the runner pushes its way over these obstructions, refusing to put forth a single bud until the proper conditions for its maintenance be reached. We have often seen a gravel-walk thus crossed by a strawberry runner, the runner being as budless as a piece of copper wire, until it had arrived at the soil on the other side, where it immediately put forth its young progeny in abundance. Instances of this kind are often ascribed to vegetable instinct; and were it not for the essential differences which evidently exist between vegetables and animals, one would be almost tempted to assign to it a higher designation. Some plants produce living seeds in the vessels where the ordinary seed is matured, as may be seen in certain species of the onion family—known as tree and apple onions; and others, like some of the

lilies, yield little perfect bulbs in the axils of the stem leaves.

Another manner in which trees multiply themselves is by their branches bending downwards till they touch the ground with the growing points, which then take root and spring up into independent stems. This frequently happens among trailing shrubs, as the bramble and honeysuckle, and may also be witnessed among our garden roses and gooseberries. A somewhat similar mode of extension is presented by the banyan, which becomes enlarged without the assistance of either seeds or suckers. Roots are produced by the under-side of the lower branches; these hang dangling in the air for months before they reach the ground; this at last they penetrate, and become stems to a new head of branches. An old tree of this kind presents a most magnificent object, forming concentric corridors over a great extent of surface. Acting upon the principles here pointed out by nature, gardeners propagate many of their favourites by layers; that is, by bending a branch or shoot till a portion of it be buried in the soil, where it throws out roots, and establishes itself as an independent plant. This being done, it is removed from the parent stock and placed in another situation.

Trees are also propagated by slips; that is, by detached young shoots being thrust into the soil, where they usually throw out roots, and grow up into healthy individuals. All plants of course cannot be slipped with the same facility; but, generally speaking, where there are well-developed leaf-buds in the axils of the perfect leaves, and where there is true wood formed, the slip will be found to take root and grow. Budding is another artificial mode of propagation: it is, in fact, merely slipping at an earlier stage of growth. In the one case there are many leaf-buds on a common stem, in the other there is only a single bud. The operation is performed by taking the leaf-bud from one tree, and neatly inserting it under the cuticle of another, where, fed by the necessary juices, it extends into a new bough or arm.

Perhaps the most curious mode of natural reproduction is that by the leaf. It is well known that many leaves, (as those of the *echveria*, *malaxis*, *gloxinia*, orange, and others, when fallen to the ground in a young and growing state, put forth roots and become perfect plants. This fact is at present exciting much attention; and since all parts of a plant are but special developments of this single organ, it is argued that there is nothing to prevent the propagation of any species of vegetation by this simple means. Considering the truth and universality of the doctrines of morphology, we cannot see why there should; and feel justified in the hope, that, once gardeners have arrived at a knowledge of the proper times and modes, they shall be enabled to rear any form of vegetation from this universal organ.

What a curious view of vegetable life do the principles of reproduction unfold! namely, that all parts of a plant—whether root, tuber, bulb, stem, branch, leaf, or seed—will, under certain conditions, grow up into a perfect individual, similar to the parent from which it has sprung. All modes do not take place at one and the same time, for nature is never prodigally wasteful of her resources; but where climate or other conditions interrupt production by one source, another is developed more exuberantly than usual to supply its place. If we have not conditions to mature fruit and seed, there will be tubers, or suckers, or runners instead; and just as the chances of failure are great, so are the modes of reproduction proportionally increased. There is nothing corresponding to this in the animal kingdom, unless among the very lowest forms, as the polyps and sponges, which also increase by division. Lop away a branch from a tree, and its place may be supplied by another; break off the limb of a crab or insect, and another limb will shortly take its place; but while the detached branch will spring up into a tree similar to its parent, all vitality has fled from the separated limb of the crustacean. Higher animals than insects and crustaceans

have no power to reproduce lost parts; but while devoid of this vegetative-like power, they have a more exalted sentient development; and if denied the power to reproduce a lost limb, they are endowed with faculties which can better protect them.

MADAME DE MIRAMION.

A ROMANCE OF REAL LIFE.

ROGER DE BUSSY, Comte de Rabutin, having only daughters by his first wife, was desirous of contracting a second marriage, in the hope of obtaining an heir to his name, and his parents were equally anxious on the subject. He wished to meet with a wife who united fortune with youth and beauty, considering this essential to support his rank at court, and to enable him to satisfy his inclination for pleasure, and his other expensive tastes.

He frequently discussed the matter with his uncle, who was prior at the Temple, and with whom he lodged when he came to Paris. At the residence of that personage, he became acquainted with an old citizen called Le Bocage, the proprietor of a considerable domain in the neighbourhood of the district of which Bussy had the command. Invited by his nephew, the prior often made that place his residence during the summer months, and there the two relatives would sometimes live for weeks together. It was in this neighbourhood that Le Bocage, Christopher de Rabutin, and the Comte de Bussy became intimate. Made acquainted with the wishes of the last to form a wealthy connexion, Le Bocage proposed to him a young and beautiful widow, equally remarkable for her piety, the sweetness of her temper, and the possession of a large fortune. Le Bocage did not know her personally, but he had a friend in whom, as her confessor and spiritual adviser, the lady placed great confidence. He was a father of the Order of Mercy, called Father Clement, but a monk of corrupt morals, willing to engage in any profligate scheme for a pecuniary consideration. With this man Bussy had a conference, and by his connivance he managed to obtain a sight of the young widow on two occasions at church. He was enraptured with her person, but was not able either to address or to approach her. Father Clement assured him, however, that he had made a favourable impression, stating, at the same time, that she could do nothing without the consent of her family, who were bent on her marrying some one of the legal profession. He advised Bussy not to run any risks, and to allow him to act for him, and he would undertake to communicate with some of her more influential relations, and induce them to consent to the marriage. In case of their refusal, he agreed to persuade the widow to avail herself of her right to dispose of herself. To forward his plan, he obtained money from Bussy, under the pretext of bribing her domestics; and the latter, completely his dupe, made over to him at different times sums to the amount of 2000 crowns. As the period approached for the opening of the military campaign, the monk persuaded Bussy not to delay his departure for the army. He set off on the 6th of May 1648, having obtained a promise from his negotiator to inform him of his proceedings.

Three weeks after his departure, he received a letter telling him that the relations of the widow were adverse to the match, and that she had not the resolution to resist them; but that she was desirous that Bussy should, by an apparent act of violence, obtain the consent she was ready to give. But the true version of the tale was as follows:—The perfidious monk had not succeeded in his plan. The moment she was aware of his object, Madame de Miramion had dismissed him, and taken another confessor. In revenge, he was determined to avail himself of the credulity and audacity of Bussy. Pretending that, as confessor, he still possessed the confidence of the widow, he induced Bussy to believe that

she regarded him so favourably, that, if he carried her off by force, she would gladly take him as her husband. The young nobleman, thus deceived, determined on following his suggestions. A royal commission had been established by Cardinal Richelieu to oppose the encroachments and license of the nobles, who looked upon the placing themselves above the law as a privilege of caste. This new authority had not been so long formed as to enable them, in every instance, to prevent or punish the abuses they had undertaken to oppose; and the civil wars of La Fronde, whilst they weakened the government, had enabled the nobility to return to their previous habits of license and oppression—the more endeared to them as evidence of their former independence.

During these times of confusion, the cases of aggression on the part of those in power towards women of inferior rank, or those who, from belonging to the mercantile class, were without family support or connexion at court, were the more frequent, because they remained almost always unpunished.

As Bussy enjoyed the favour and protection of the Prince de Condé, he related to him the whole affair. The proposed adventure pleased the young prince, who offered to give his friend a commission at Paris, and even to make over to him the command of Bellegarde, one of his own places in Burgundy, in order to facilitate his plans. Bussy expressed his gratitude, and accepted the commission, but refused the offer with regard to Bellegarde; all he required was the means of transferring his beautiful prisoner to Lannay, where was an ancient castle, surrounded by thick walls, and only to be entered by drawbridges. No sooner, therefore, had he fulfilled the commission given to him by the prince, than he went to his coadjutor, who confirmed all he had previously written, and encouraged him in his scheme; not doubting, he said, that once separated from her family, Madame de Miramion would consent to marry him without difficulty.

Nothing could have been easier than for Bussy to have satisfied himself of the real state of the lady's feelings before adopting so desperate a measure; but whether his own self-conceit did not allow him to doubt of his success, or from shame of having been so duped, he declares in his own memoirs that his agent had no interest in it, beyond the wish to gratify a friend, and he could not therefore doubt the sincerity of Clement. It must be allowed also that the profession to which the father belonged, and the nature of his connexion with the young widow, were sufficient of themselves to allay suspicion; so that, whilst this innocent victim was totally ignorant of the pretensions of the comte, or even of his wish to marry her, no one having given a hint on the subject, Bussy was firmly persuaded that she had not only given her consent, but had long since been made acquainted with his intentions.

Madame de Miramion was the daughter of a rich Burgess of Orleans. A child of precocious understanding, she doted on her mother with an energy beyond her years; and when, at scarcely nine years of age, she was deprived by death of this beloved parent, the event made a deep and lasting impression on her sensitive nature, which seemed to resist every effort made to dispel it. One of her aunts, who had the charge of her education, though the sister of a bishop, considered that religious fervour was taking too strong a hold on the mind of her young pupil; and in some measure to counteract it, she drew her into society, and took her to balls and to the theatre. Wherever she went, the beauty of her person, more than her wealth, attracted universal admiration, and many were the suitors for her hand. In 1645 she married Jean Jacques de Beauharnois, lord of Miramion, counsellor of the parliament of Paris, whose fortune equalled her own. He was only twenty-seven years of age, handsome, with a commanding figure, and of a most amiable disposition. By her husband she was not restrained, as by her aunt, in her pious exercises. So well assorted a union made her feel a happiness to

which she had been a stranger from childhood. She loved and was beloved. She had but one wish, by the strict discharge of every duty not to allow her prospect of future welfare to be endangered by the prosperity and happiness she enjoyed in this life. Only six months passed in the enjoyment of this happiness: at the end of that period her husband was taken from her by a pulmonary attack. Soon after, she gave birth to a daughter, so weak and sickly that it was with the utmost difficulty her life could be preserved. Religion and maternal tenderness prevented Madame de Miramon from sinking in despair; she passed the two first years of her widowhood in the closest seclusion, alternately at the foot of the altar, and by the cradle of her child.

Born in 1629, she was little more than sixteen when she became a widow and a mother. Her relations, who were tenderly attached to her, feared she would take the veil. They wished to keep her amongst them, and flattered themselves, from her extreme youth, that she might in time be induced to form a second connexion; and having allowed her a long period for the indulgence of her grief, they proposed it to her. Several brilliant offers presented themselves. Many of those who sought her feared that her beauty and her wealth might give reason to suspect the disinterestedness of their attachment; but on every occasion she expressed in the strongest terms her wish to reject all proposals of the kind. Attacked by the small-pox, she was sorry it had not deprived her of those attractions which her piety caused her to regret; and yet, deeply touched with the attachment of her relations, she did not like entirely to close her doors against those they sought to introduce to her acquaintance.

Her humility made her consider herself unworthy to consecrate herself to heaven. She hesitated, and only asked for time to be allowed her to make her decision; and in the meanwhile she multiplied her acts of devotion, in the hope that God would reveal himself to her and declare his will, whilst her friends pleased themselves with the hope of obtaining her consent to an alliance with some family equally rich with their own.

Such was the person whom Bussy, without any personal acquaintance, proposed to carry off and force into wedlock, persuaded that she would consider herself honoured in belonging to him, and would be gratified in appearing at a court from which her birth and the rank of her family precluded her.

Secure in the support of the prince, he looked upon an elopement with a female, who, notwithstanding her wealth, was in his eyes only a bourgeoisie, as a matter of no consequence. The elder brother of Madame de Miramon, then twenty-five years of age, was the only individual in the family to cause him any uneasiness.

His preparations were not so secret that they did not in some degree transpire. Madame had noticed given her from various quarters that she was to be carried off; but as the author of the intended insult was not named, and as she was convinced that no one of those who aspired to her hand could be guilty of such an outrage, she placed no reliance in the report, and took no precautions to ward it off.

Bussy knew that she was living at Issy with her mother-in-law, and had obtained information from those in his confidence that on the 7th of August she was to go to St Valerien to perform her devotions, and he arranged his plans accordingly. He placed four relays betwixt St Cloud and Lannay, a distance of twenty-five leagues. He assembled a strong escort, composed of his brother, a friend who had served two campaigns as a volunteer under his orders, and three other gentlemen, his vassals and dependents. They were attended by servants all well mounted and armed.

Madame de Miramon, entirely engrossed with the religious duties she was about to perform, set off from Issy at seven in the morning. Her mother-in-law accompanied her, and, according to the custom with

persons of a certain condition at that period, she was attended by an old equestrian and two women; the one a governess, a middle-aged person, the other a young chambermaid. A man-servant was mounted behind them.

Bussy's squadron was posted on the road betwixt St Cloud and Mont Valerien, opposite a bridge, which the lady's carriage had no sooner traversed than it was stopped. Two of the cavaliers attempted to let down the leather curtains which shut up the persons within from their view. Madame de Miramon endeavoured to drive them off by striking them with a bag she held in her hand, and calling loudly for help; but her cries and her efforts were unavailing. Not being able to succeed in letting down the curtains, her assailants attempted to cut the fastenings with their swords. Madame de Miramon, with a courage beyond her sex, endeavoured to wrest the weapons from them, and in doing so, had her hands severely cut. During this unequal combat, the squadron had forced the coachman to re-pass the bridge, and to enter the Bois de Boulogne, where a carriage was in waiting, drawn by six horses. In this Bussy would have placed the lady, but no persuasion could induce him to move; and she fixed herself so firmly in her seat, that nothing but violence could have been availing. Bussy therefore unharnessed her horses, replaced them with his own, placed Madame de Miramon's coachman and horses in the charge of two grooms, with orders to convey them to Paris and detain them there, and then set off at full gallop across the plain of St Denis into the forest of Lail. The captive lady called to all the passers by, gave her name, and intreated them to forward the alarm to her friends at Paris. But the clouds of dust caused by so large a cavalcade, the wind, the noise, and the rapid pace at which they proceeded, frustrated all her efforts. Having reached the forest, where from the nature of the road the escort could no longer surround the carriage, Madame de Miramon made an attempt to escape, by throwing herself into a thicket copse, where she flattered herself she might remain concealed, heedless of the thorns and briars which covered her with blood; but she was soon discovered, and perceiving she could not avoid her pursuers, to prevent them from seizing her, with a violent effort she flew back to the carriage, and threw herself into it.

Bussy halted in the most retired part of the forest, where the escort took some refreshment; but his captive positively refused what was offered to her, declaring she would touch nothing till restored to liberty.

Still deceived with regard to her conduct, and astonished at her resistance, Bussy flattered himself that it was a flint on her part, and that she would become more tranquil if her mother-in-law and the old domestic were disposed of. He therefore turned them and the governess out of the carriage. He would only have retained the other female, but the man-servant declared he would rather die than abandon her. Wherever they stopped she made the same ineffectual efforts to obtain assistance; but those who guarded her gave out that she was insane, and her disordered appearance, her torn clothes, her bleeding face and hands, gave a colour to the assertion.

Bussy was now but too well convinced that her resistance was not feigned, and for a moment he thought of taking her back, but was dissuaded from it by his brother, who represented to him, that when her alarm had subsided, she might be prevailed upon to change her mind. Arrived at the castle, the noise of the portcullis, the dismal appearance of the structure, the number of armed men collected, all contributed to increase her alarm. She did not even know the names or the intentions of her enemies; but from the whole of their conduct, she considered them capable of the worst crimes, and nothing could induce her to quit the carriage. At length one of the party, a knight of Malta, whom she recognised as having made part of the escort, intreated her in the most respectful manner to enter the castle.

2877 Madame de Mirmion, without moving, inquired in
 2878 a stern voice, whether it was by the order of the person
 2879 who addressed her that she was thus treated. 'No,
 2880 madame,' said he, 'it is the Comte de Bussy Rabutin,
 2881 who has assured us that he was acting with your con-
 2882 sent.' 'How absurd a strange notion!' said she, 'but
 2883 it is false, utterly false!' she exclaimed, raising her
 2884 voice.

Madame, said he, 'we are here two hundred gentlemen, friends of Monsieur de Bussy; if he has deceived us, we will protect you, and restore you to liberty; only condescend to explain yourself more fully, and in the meantime do not refuse to dismount, and give yourself some repose.'

His respectful manner inspired her with confidence; she would not enter any of the furnished apartments, but remained in a low damp hall, where no preparation had been made for her reception, but where a fire was lighted in great haste, and her carriage cushions were placed for her to sit upon. On entering, she observed a pair of pistols on the table, and instantly took possession of them; and finding them loaded, placed them by her. Her attendant having attempted to leave the room, she insisted on her not quitting her; they brought her food, but she would touch nothing. Bussy, afraid of encountering her reproaches, kept aloof; he was amazed at her anger and her decision. "I had been assured," he said to his accomplices; "that she was a lamb, whereas she is more like an enraged lioness."

Still he did not despair of softening her, by employing a person who acted as governess or housekeeper in the castle, and others to speak in his behalf; assuring her of his attachment, of his regret, and throwing all the blame upon her confessor.

These explanations in some degree dissipated her alarm, but did not lessen her indignation against her captor, who had employed such means to gain his object. When they found her inaccessible to persuasion, they tried to work upon her fears. They described the comte, though naturally mild and generous, yet capable of everything if his passions were excited; and that it was her interest not to reduce him to despair. But nothing could produce the least concession on her part; and at length Bussy sent her word, that she should be restored to liberty on condition of her granting him one moment's interview.

The instant he entered she rose from her seat, and exclaimed with an uplifted hand, "Sir, I vow in the presence of God, my Maker and yours, never to become your wife!" and then fainted away. Medical assistance was procured; she was declared to be in imminent danger; forty hours had passed without her taking nourishment, and her strength was exhausted.

In the meantime her mother-in-law had not been idle. She had made the best of her way to the nearest village, procured a horse for the old quarry, and despatched him to her family to give notice of what had occurred whilst she secured a wagon for herself, which conveyed her to Paris. It was shortly after, announced to Bussey that the town of Sens was in an uproar, and that six hundred men were coming to attack the castle. Noway, alarmed at the intelligence, he made a last attempt to induce Madame de Miramon to remain at least one day at Lannay. Her only reply was a request that he would instantly give orders for her departure. The horse being harnessed, and the carriage in readiness, she set two eggs; Bussey in secret gave fifty louis to her maid under pretence of defraying the expenses of her journey, but in reality to make her favourable to his views. The carriage set off, escorted by the knight of Maltre and two other gentlemen; the whole journey he rode by her side, endeavouring by his conversation and representations to place the comte's conduct in a favourable light; but an approaching Sens, fearful that they might be arrested by the authorities, they halted at the outskirts of the town, and having unharnessed the horses the escort took their leave, and galloped back to Lannay.

dismounted from her carriage, and traversing the faubourg of Sens on foot, found the gates closed. She learned, however, that every one was under arms, by the order of the queen regent, for the rescue of a lady who had been forcibly carried off. 'Alas!' said she, 'I am that person.' The news instantly spread; her brother, her mother-in-law, and her other relations soon joined her. Great was her joy to find herself once more amongst them, but her frame had received a severe shock. She fell dangerously ill, and for a long time her recovery was doubtful. A troop of armed men in the meanwhile was sent to Lannay to seize the person of Bussy, but he had made his escape, with all his accomplices.

When the trial came on, Madame de Miramon showed the greatest leniency, and treated her family to pardon a repentant culprit. They were the less disposed to do so, because after this event she showed herself more averse than ever to every proposal of marriage. She considered it as a warning from heaven, and determined from henceforth to dedicate herself to religion and good works. Bussy, alarmed at the scrape he had got into, intreated the Prince de Condé to interfere in his behalf, who, in consequence, wrote to her family a very urgent letter. The solicitations of a prince who, by the victory of Sens, had again saved France, were not to be resisted; the suit was dropped, but was renewed when Condé and Bussy made war against the parliament and La Fronde. Bussy acknowledged that in the course of these civil disturbances he had formed a plan of burning the castle of Rubelle, the property of Madame de Miramon; but his better feelings prevailed, and he placed a guard there to protect it, and he reaped the benefit of his good conduct.

The prosecution was dropped altogether on condition of his never appearing in her presence, and avoiding any place where she might be.

However humiliating was such a promise, he adhered faithfully to it. Thirty-six years passed, during which they never met. At the end of that period he was engaged in a lawsuit, the loss or gain of which depended on the President de Nemond, who had married Madame de Miramion's only daughter. To do away the injury which the recollection of his past conduct might have upon the mind of her son-in-law, he determined, through the intervention of a friend of his, and a cousin of Madame de Miramion's, to obtain an interview with her. Admitted into the presence of one who had been connected with so remarkable an event in his life, he encountered no longer the young and delicate beauty clothed in silk and lace, such as she was when he carried her off from St Cloud, but a large fat woman, her head enclosed in an enormous coiffure, dressed in a gray woollen gown, with a deep cambric cape without any trimming, and her only ornament a cross, from which was suspended a lock of her daughter's hair. Her eyes still retained their brilliancy, and the charms of her features were not entirely lost under the disguise of a double chin. The expression of her countenance, her manner, her costume, were all in unison; all contributed to express the absence of tumultuous passions and the equanimity of her temper. Busy as so struck that he remained for a time silent; but he was soon reassured by the tone of benevolence in which she addressed him, and the anxiety she expressed to learn the motive of his visit. When he had explained himself, and had proved to her satisfactorily that the right was on his side, Madame de Miramion promised to interest her son-in-law in his cause, and induce him to give it a favourable hearing: it came on shortly after, and was decided in his favour. All those acquainted with the history of the times will recognize Madame de Miramion, in this generous conduct. This excellent woman, having made a vow to consecrate herself to God, preferred her duties as a parent to the idleness of a cloister: devoting herself to the care of her child, who was almost always ill, the best years of her life were given up to her education. Having introduced her to

the world, and secured her happiness by a suitable marriage, discharging herself of all worldly cares, she gave herself up to the most enthusiastic charity; her strength of body and the resources of her mind seeming to increase in proportion to the amount of misery that surrounded her. She founded establishments at Paris, Amiens, and other places, bearing her name, for the instruction of schoolmistresses, and for nurses for the poor; she opened workshops for the industrious, and houses of refuge for the repentant sinner. During two years, from her own means she supported seven hundred poor persons who had been dismissed from the general hospital for want of funds. She assisted St Vincent de Paul in establishing a foundling hospital; and when the town of Melun was visited by a contagious disorder, she relieved the sick by every means in her power, and for two months—braving death in her own person—she nursed those whose relations and friends had abandoned them from fear. She contributed by her liberality to the establishment of foreign missions, and caused the name of France to be blessed to the extremities of the world. Prostrate on her knees before an irritated father, she averted the curse about to be bestowed upon an offending son, and obtained his pardon. Even princesses sought her advice in their difficulties, and implored the consolation of her presence and her prayers in their last moments. Louis XIV., with that discernment which characterised him, employed her as his almoner in the distribution of his charities, and she was consulted on all sides by those engaged in works of charity and benevolence. Madame de Sévigné in her letters designates her as 'the Mother of the Church,' and says with truth that her death, which took place in 1696, was a public loss.*

USE OF OPIATES AMONG THE OPERATIVE POPULATION.

Among the numerous causes of disease and death brought to light by the publication of the report of the Health of Towns Committee, there is one to which but little attention has been paid; and yet, as appears from the statements of Dr Lyon Playfair, it is an evil of a most serious character, widely spread, and one that saps the vitals of the labouring population at their very source. The details in great part will appear incredible to those who are unacquainted with the habits of the poorer classes.

We have been accustomed to read with feelings of horror of the prevalence of infanticide in some of our Indian provinces; but what shall we think of the habitual practice of administering opiates to infants from their very birth, to lull them to quietness while their mothers are working in the factories?—in too many cases, unhappily, careless of the appalling consequences of their indiscretion, which show themselves eventually in the deformity, disease, or death of their offspring.

'The custom first originated,' says Dr Playfair, 'according to all concurrent evidence, in the frequency of disorders, having their primary seat either in the stomach or bowels, arising partly from injudicious feeding and improper nursing, but principally from the irritability produced by their continued exposure to a polluted atmosphere, and other physical causes of disease. The children thus disordered were taken to unlicensed practitioners, who prescribed opiates as a general remedy, and their mothers mistook the soothing effects produced by narcotics for proofs of improvement, and themselves continued the practice. They soon discovered that the administration of narcotic drugs prevented restlessness in the child, enabling them to pur-

sue their ordinary avocations; and thus a practice, often originating in disease, has become habitual, even in cases where disease did not exist. Druggists who vend such narcotic preparations speak as to the extent of their use; and their evidence is perhaps the more to be depended upon, as it was their interest to diminish rather than to exaggerate the extent of the evil.' He goes on to give the evidence of 'a respectable druggist in Manchester, whose customers are, however, entirely of the poorer class, among whom it may safely be said that there is scarcely a single family in which this practice does not prevail. The way it is done is this: the mother goes out to her work in the morning, leaving her child in charge either of a woman who cannot be troubled with it, or with another child of perhaps ten years old. A dose of "quietness" is therefore given to the child to prevent it being troublesome. The child thus drugged sleeps, and may waken at dinner-time; so when the mother goes out again, the child receives another dose. Well, the mother and father come home at night quite fatigued, and as they must rise early to begin work for the day, they must sleep undisturbed by the child; so it is again drugged, and in this manner young children are often drugged three times in each day. This druggist states further that he sells, in retail alone, about five gallons per week of "quietness," and half a gallon of "Godfrey;" the strength of the former preparation is such as to contain one hundred drops of laudanum in an ounce; a single teaspoonful is the prescribed dose; so that, allowing one ounce weekly to each family, this one druggist supplies 700 families every week.'

A melancholy characteristic of this fatal practice is the unconcern with which it is followed. Another druggist says, there is 'no dread of laudanum now; it is often used for the same purposes as "quietness." The usual dose to produce sleep in a restless child is eight drops, and this being, like the other, gradually increased to three doses a-day, amount to twenty-four drops.' We are informed that 'three druggists,' whose evidence is just quoted, 'all of acknowledged respectability, are selling respectively five-and-a-half, three-and-a-half, and one—in all ten gallons weekly; two of them testifying that almost all the families of the poor in that district habitually drug their children with opiates; and the third, after a lengthened examination of all the customers who attended a pawnbroker's shop, kept by a relative of his own, giving as a statistical result, that five out of six families in his district were in the habitual use of narcotics for children.'

In the report furnished by the Rev. J. Clay, on the sanitary condition of Preston,* there is a table illustrative of the proportions of infantile deaths in the dispensary, and in the worst streets: in the former the proportion is, in even numbers, 8 per cent.; in the latter 44 per cent.—a most striking difference, which is accounted for by the fact that, 'if the wretched inhabitants of these worst streets sought medical aid at all, they would seek it most likely where it could be obtained without charge. If the druggist is sometimes applied to for the medicine, which with greater propriety and safety would be prescribed by the medical man, he is too often asked for compounds which no medical man would prescribe; such as "Godfrey's Cordial," "Infants' Preservative," "Soothing Syrup," "Mothers' Blessing," &c. Returns have been obtained from almost all the chemists and druggists in Preston of the quantity of these mixtures sold by each; the aggregate of the whole quantity indicates that, allowing half an ounce per week to each family, upwards of 1600 families are in the habit of using "Godfrey's Cordial," or some other equally injurious compound.' Mr Robert Brown, a surgeon, states, 'A child was brought to me for a little aperient medicine; the mother suspected that the person who nursed it had been in the habit of giving it some narcotic. It had not had more than two or three motions

* The above has been translated from a French work by the Baron Walckenaer, entitled 'Memoirs Relating to the Life and Writings of Madame de Sévigné.'

* See First Report, page 163.

for the space of three weeks. I advised the mother to stay at home and attend to it herself. The advice was followed, and the child recovered in a few days."

It may be thought that the evils here pointed out being moral rather than physical, admit easily of the application of the proper remedies; but it is observed that "the thoughtlessness and unreflecting ignorance of many parents, and the callousness towards their offspring of others, is stronger than the parental feeling, which will lead, in numerous instances, to the indiscriminate administration of opiates and spirituous liquors to sick children."

"Similar evidence as to the prevalence of the custom is given by druggists in all the towns visited. In Wigan, four druggists examined agree in describing the practice as "very prevalent among the lower orders," and in stating that it appears to prevail with all those who have occupations in factories, workshops, and other places at a distance from home, which oblige mothers to leave their children the whole or greatest part of a day." The same statements were made by druggists at Rochdale and Bury; and Mr Whitehead, the registrar for Ashton-under-Lyne, says, "I conceive that the practice of administering opiates to children is very prevalent among the working-classes, and I think more particularly where there are natural children born, and left in charge of the keepers of houses where the mothers lodge, while the latter are working in the mill. In going to register deaths, I have frequently remarked children looking very ill, and on observing this to the neighbours, they have said, "It is no wonder that they are so—they are slept to death;" meaning that sleeping stuffs were given to them."

The same fatal practice prevails also in Liverpool, accompanied, among the Irish population, by the administration of ardent spirits; equally destructive of human life. In fact, in the whole of Lancashire and the factory districts generally, the evil has been adopted with the most reckless disregard of consequences. The painful surprise which the perusal of these statements produces will, however, be diminished when we read that "it is no uncommon thing to meet with married females at fifteen, and they are frequently mothers at seventeen; the fathers being but little older. To increase the bearing of this cause upon the mortality of children in the manufacturing districts, comes the fact, that in two, three, or four weeks after delivery, the young mother, if she have but one, two, or three children, returns to her work in the mills, leaving the charge of her children either to some old woman or young girl, or puts them out to nurse. The effects of this unnatural treatment are visible upon the infant in a very short time. A child, born apparently strong and healthy, may almost always be known two or three months after birth if it belong to a mother who goes to the factory. Instead of being plump and growing, it is almost invariably emaciated and less than at birth—commonly wasted by continued diarrhoea, brought on by the manner of its diet. The mother suckles it but at meal times and at night; the milk, having been so long secreted, is too stimulating for the child, and the succedaneous food, in quantity and kind, adds to the irritation. The greatest ignorance prevails as to the organisation and requirements of a child as regards diet. It is no uncommon thing to be consulted for emaciated children with extensive mesenteric disease; and on inquiry, to find that the food consists in great part of bacon, fried meat, and fatty potatoes, when the infant has not perhaps two teeth in each jaw to masticate it." I am convinced of the great bearing of these facts upon the mortality of children, from the circumstance that a greater proportional number of first and second children die before they attain five years of age, than of children born after the mother has relinquished her factory employment.* While much of this great mortality may

doubtless be traced to the extremes of poverty so often met with in manufacturing districts, there is ample evidence of the waste of infant life from the causes in question; for in Wiltshire and Dorsetshire, where the wages are notoriously low, only 11 per cent. of all the children born die before they attain one year of age, while 17 per cent. are carried off in Lancashire. Dr Playfair observes that, "in the small town of Clitheroe, the population of which, amounting to 6765, consisting partly of calico-printers, and partly of factory operatives, I found a weekly sale of four pints of Godfrey's Cordial, and an annual sale of 4000 poppy heads, for making "sleeping tea for children." One druggist describes these drugs as being sold "to an alarming extent among the factory population: not so much so among printers." Another describes the sale "as decent for the size of the town."

The evil is not only serious in its actual effects, but in prospect; all the inquiries made on the subject elicited proofs of its alarming increase, with a tendency upwards to the middle classes; it has been alleged, though without any clear foundation, that the increase arises from the "temperance movement"; the use of fermented liquors being supplied by that of opiates. But the whole weight of medical testimony is directly opposed to their exhibition. We are told that "the administration of this class of medicines requires the greatest skill in the physician. Nothing is more uncertain than the effects of opium upon young subjects; and it ought never to be employed, even by medical men, except with the greatest caution, as it sometimes acts with much violence, and has proved deleterious even in very small doses. Half a drachm of genuine syrup of white poppy, and, in some instances, a few drops of "Dalby's Carmative" has proved fatal in the course of a few hours to very young infants.*"

In summing up the evidence, we encounter evils still more fearfully impressive. Who that has felt the endearing relation of infantile existence, can fail of being moved by the statement of a druggist who says, "it is curious to see the children in the shop; they stretch out their little hands, for they know the bottle, and when they get it, drink it as eagerly as the drunkard does his glass. I have seen the little children in the shop put the neck of the bottle in their mouths and bite the cork, so fond are they of the preparation; for coming to the shop so often, they know the bottle."

We read of a child who had been so much habituated to the drugs, that it "took 100 drops of laudanum during the day;" and of parents "who are in the habit of giving their children these drugs when the child is only three or four weeks old, and in many instances younger: this is gradually increased to a double dose, until at last some children will take six drachms a-day to produce the same effect as half a drachm did when they first began to take it."

There is no difference of opinion among the witnesses as to the extent of the evil, which is felt not only in the loss by death, but in the deterioration and destruction of the mental and physical powers of those who survive the treatment. Dr Playfair states that "instances have been brought before him in which idiocy and insanity have certainly followed as the result of the practice;" and further, "I have been led by laborious inquiry to the conclusion, that the custom of administering narcotics to children originated primarily in, and is upheld by, the physical causes of disease acting upon the younger portion of the community. On the removal of these causes, the general inducement to the continuance of the system would cease, for the irritability and difficulty of management of children would diminish with their increased health. It is an evil not confined to factory districts, as some have alleged, for the recent trials in Wales have shown it to be very prevalent in rural districts; and numerous inquiries in small towns in agricultural counties have convinced me of its exist-

* See Chambers's Miscellany of Tracts, No. 6, for Management of Infants.

† Dr Strange, Ashton.

* Dr John Clarke on the Diseases of Children. London. 1815.

once there, though to a much less extent. The diffusion of knowledge, and, above all, the removal of the physical causes of disease, will go far to check this great evil."

We would gladly indulge the hope that our endeavour to set forth the horrible results of this practice, may be the means of directing such attention to it as will tend to diminish or remove it altogether. We agree with Dr. Playfair that to education alone are we to look for the real remedy; much may be done with the people as well as for them. Health is as dear to the poor as to the rich. The most abject part of the population—creatures who belong to no class, but are the reprobates, unfortunate, fallen of all classes and several races—can understand its value, and, as we know, are capable of making sacrifices for the good of others; what may not then be expected from the great mass of the labouring English population, from the intelligent artisans of towns, who are so apt in acquiring their difficult arts, and are certainly not surpassed by other classes in the facility with which they grasp and carry out a scientific principle clearly announced? To leave many things to the people themselves will be to proceed slowly, because knowledge and new principles can only be communicated slowly, but it will be to proceed surely; and the improvement will not die away or be superficial, for it will be the act of the mind, penetrate the inmost recesses of home, and be imparted to future generations."

Illustration of the House of Lords, from a sketch by the artist.

A SKETCH OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

A STRANGER entering the old House of Lords could hardly have failed to be struck with some degree of awe, if not from consideration of its being the meeting-place of the highest assembly in Britain, at least from the historical associations connected with it. Before him stood the gorgeous throne which Henry VII. despite his avarice, had adorned, and the bulky figure of Henry VIII. had filled. On its steps had knelt Anne Boleyn, when she sued, but sued in vain, for mercy. On it Edward VI. had reclined, when his frame was so attenuated by disease, and the medical art stood so low, that, despairing of relief from the faculty, his minister says Hume, "had resorted to the assistance of an old woman, or a witch." There had sat his sister, the saturnine, bigoted, yet fond, faithful, and upright Mary Tudor; and there, in succession, the masculine and lion-hearted Elizabeth, after she had sealed the fate of the lovely, hapless, but faithless Mary Stuart. James had there been addressed by Bacon; and there had Charles whispered with Laud and Strafford. That throne had been cast aside as lumber by the astute and daring Cromwell, who cared little for either throne, or mace, or "bauble," or any other emblem of power, so long as he retained the substance. The tapestry which overhang the chamber walls had commemorated the defeat of the Spanish Armada and witnessed the triumph of the Reform Bill; and with many another striking scene of history that throne was identified, until the fire of 1834 consigned it to the recollections of the past.

The aspect of the present house is different, but still impressive. On entering, you perceive a long, narrow, red painted chamber, surmounted by a gallery, which in some degree obscures its light at one extremity, and terminating in consequence of the absence of a window, in a still deeper gloom where stands the throne at the other. The appearance of the place is rather what would be called "neat" than splendid. Its prevailing red, however, gives it an aspect of regality, though monotonous, and even the most frivolous spectator must be struck with the recollection, that here the laws of England are confirmed, and that even the Commons are obliged to stand uncovered in its precincts. It is the highest court in the kingdom, and yet the one to which access is most readily obtained. A stranger, when an absorbing case of swindling is being investi-

gated, may have some difficulty in finding his way into a police court; and when an interesting murderer is to be tried, he will assuredly be excluded from the Old Bailey, unless—*malgré* all the orders and admonitions of judges and aldermen—he propitiates the attendant Cerberus with some shining current coin; but into the House of Lords, when in the morning they are sitting in appeal, overturning the decisions of half the judges, and disposing the interests of half the realm, he will be courteously shown by one of the attendant gentlemen doorkeepers; for all the doorkeepers of both houses are gentlemen in appearance, and most of them so in station too; the salaries of the offices being so high, and their duties so small, as to render them appointments to many exceedingly desirable. On passing the threshold, he will find the chamber much as we have described it, and in addition he will see a grave yet courteous, dignified but graceful, stern yet suave personage, in full flowing wig, before him; a bishop, in wig of less ample dimensions, and lawn sleeves—though frequently also in private dress, and distinguished only by the never-abandoned 'apron,' and primly upturned clerical hat—with some respectable-looking elderly man on one side, and on the other two of more active and business-like character. The first is the chancellor, Lord Lyndhurst, whose highly polished appearance and refined placid demeanour strangely disappoint those who, from his speeches and his reputation, would be prepared to find in him the representation of Mephistopheles or Maciavel at least; the respectable-looking man beside him, on the right or ministerial side of the house, is some member of England's hereditary nobility, whose acres or whose ancestors are better known than himself. The personages on the opposition benches are Lords Brougham and Campbell, two retired law officers, who thus do their best to make a return to the country for the pensions which they enjoy.

On another day, and at another hour, if he have interest enough—but this is a difficult matter—to procure a ticket from the lord chamberlain, let him go in, and he will there find the sovereign assembled amid England's congregated peers. Heedless of what is passing out of doors—careless of the splendour of the pageantry and the glories of the Park, the prancing of the horsemasters and the acclamations of the crowd, the blaze of St James's and the crush of Whitehall—he must take his seat at least two hours before; and even then he will find the chamber beginning to be filled with the beauty and nobility of England. Nor do foreign ladies fail to add lustre to the scene. In yonder box, allotted to the ambassadors, may be descried the splendour of Austria, the coarser magnificence of Russia, the dark-eyed beauties of the peninsular embassies, the graceful gaiety of the French, with the elegant frivolity of some Italian state. An Indian prince, in eastern decoration, perhaps imparts variety to the nodding plumes; and there, generally in red capote, will be found the adroon, small-poxed Turkish envoy, looking imperturbable on all around. Two o'clock approaches—the boom of the Park guns announcing the queen's arrival is heard; the trumpet, resounding through the vaulted aisles, strikes the ear so soon as she alights from her vehicle; a flourish re-echoes its notes from the martial band; the inspiring strains of 'God save the queen,' are raised; a few minutes are passed in the robing-room to don the paraphernalia of royalty; and, preceded by her chief minister in the upper house, bearing the sword of state erect in his hand, the queen of England appears amongst her peers. Led by her consort, and with her long train supported behind, she assumes her seat upon the throne; all rise on her approach; but she gracefully bids them be reseated. The usher of the black rod—an old dignified-looking man—is enjoined to summon the 'faithful Commons' to attend; another space of a few minutes elapses, during which her majesty generally chats with some royal uncle or noble attendant. By and by a patterer's voice is heard at a distance, and gradually in-

crosses in loudness if not distinctness. Soon it assumes a nearer sound; and, with their speaker, and scarcely less important place at their head, in burst the representatives of the people. 'Order, order' is perhaps heard from the lips of the chancellor, re-echoed by the voice of the speaker, if they be especially unruly; and, receiving it from her conscience-keeper on bended knee, her majesty, with marked and distinct elocution, delivers that royal speech which is generally anticipated with so much eagerness, and received with so little satisfaction. In twenty minutes the whole is over; the royal *cortege* departs as it came; the house breaks up; and the stranger is left to moralise—if moralist he be—upon the idle pageantry of the scene.

Let him return to the house about five o'clock, and if he obtain admission by a peer's order, he will find it of a character somewhat more intellectual. The lord chancellor then reads her majesty's 'most gracious speech,' as it is termed, to the surrounding senators; and some noble lord, little known to fame, who then generally makes his first appearance as a speaker, rises to propose an address in return, with the originality of which her majesty cannot fail to be eminently struck, inasmuch as it is invariably an echo of her own words. Nor, if she read the morning papers, will she often find reason to complain, that the noble lord has wandered from his subject, as every sentence of his speech is generally but an amplification or paraphrase of her own, delivered in accents by no means so fluent or agreeable, but often repetitious and redundant, until they are cut down to something like form and propriety by the gentlemen of the fourth estate. When he has 'said his say'—generally a very painful process—the speaker sits down; and another noble lord, of whom the world at large usually knows about as much, gets up, goes over the same ground, hammers at the same thoughts, stammers at the same words, hopes their lordships will excuse his inexperience as a public speaker, and concludes, or begins, by declaring that his predecessor's words were so luminous, his arguments so convincing, and views so comprehensive, as to have left him little to add. If there be no opposition—as is generally the case now-a-days, when a prime minister plumes himself on his dexterity in framing a royal speech with which no fault can be found, because there is nothing decisive expressed—a leading member on the opposite benches gets up; 'just hints a fault, and hesitates dislike,' insinuates how much more satisfactory to the country would have been a royal speech from his own party; sits down; and after a few words from a principal minister, expressing how delighted he is, and how much more so her majesty must be, with their wonderful unanimity, the address is voted *à cor.*

But if a debate take place, a different scene ensues, and the house presents a much more animated appearance. So soon as the noble mover and seconder of the address have sat down, the leader of the opposition gets up, and attacks the whole with an energy which could not be surpassed if the existence of the country, instead of his own chance of office, depended on the issue. Fast and furious the words flow; he may not speak very distinctly or grammatically, but what he wants in logic and language, he makes up in copiousness and vehemence; and you would suppose that he was to conclude by an earnest address to her majesty, craving her instantly to send the obnoxious ministry to Tower-hill. The minister on the opposite side rises with a look of unblenched boldness, and before he resumes his seat, he proves, satisfactorily to his own party at least, that the country is in a miraculous state of prosperity under his government, and that his opponents alone ought to have been impeached. Another member from the opposition benches rises; picks fresh holes, and finds new faults: an orator from the ministerial ranks succeeds him; and thus they go on abusing the wares of each other like rival blacking-makers; till, by and by, when argument and vituperation appear exhausted, the matter comes to a vote; and the bold minister, producing from his pocket

the proxies of a hundred absent senators, whose intuitive wisdom enables them most unerringly to decide the merits of the debate without hearing it, settles the whole by a most satisfactory majority.

FALSE CRITICISM BY TRUE POETS.

THAT good poets are sometimes bad judges of excellence in their own art, may seem at first thought an untenable position, but it can easily be maintained by a reference to the history of literature. Jealousy, envy, self-conceit, an exclusive cultivation of some particular department of his art, or a strong idiosyncrasy of mind, or some early association, may as easily occasion an obliquity of judgment in the poet as in the mechanic. An author has an open or secret bias towards that branch of composition which he has most practised himself, and in which he is conscious that he best succeeds. This feeling too often influences his judgment upon the works of writers whose style and subject are essentially different from his own. To support his preferences, he invents or adopts certain theories or canons that would confine all literary merit within the narrow limits of his own sect or school. It is thus that the natural brotherhood of poets has been divided into innumerable parties, who regard each other with avowed hostility and contempt. They are blinded to all excellence that is not in some degree akin to their own.

In support of the foregoing remarks, I shall proceed to notice some of the most glaring mistakes of poetical critics.

One of the most celebrated of the poet-critics of modern times was Dr Samuel Johnson, who displayed extraordinary sagacity and acuteness in analysing the merits of the kind of poetry that was most allied to his own, but who could never pass beyond that limit with any degree of safety or success. Speaking entirely from his own feelings, he closes his review of *Paradise Lost* with the Gothic assertion, that its perusal is a duty rather than a pleasure. Of the *Lycidas*, which is so full of rich and varied melodies, he was of opinion that the diction was harsh and the numbers unpleasing. He once told Anna Seward that 'he would hang a dog that read that poem twice.' Of Collins, Johnson's unfavourable judgment is well known. With all his partiality and tenderness for the man, he had no feeling for the poet. He thought his poetry was not without some degree of merit, but confessed that he found it unattractive. 'As men,' said he, 'are often esteemed who cannot be loved, so the poetry of Collins may sometimes extort praise when it gives little pleasure; and this is said of the finest ode-writer in the language—one of the most poetical of poets. The author of the *Ode to Evening*—a poem that floats into the reader's mind like a stream of celestial music—is pronounced harsh and prosaic in his diction. The high tone of Gray's lyric muse, and his exquisite versification, were lost upon the patron of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden.' When some one spoke to him of Chatterton, he exclaimed indignantly, 'Talk not to me of the powers of a vulgar uneducated stripling! What would he have said of Burns?'

Dr Johnson was one of the best of the commentators upon Shakespeare, and yet this is saying little in his favour—'bad is the best.' His remarks and explanations are generally sensible and clear, and his preface to Shakespeare's plays is a noble piece of writing; but he never seems to enter thoroughly into the soul of that mighty poet. He could explain an obscure passage more readily than he could feel a fine one. Pope, also, was rather too much of a town wit and fashionable satirist to enjoy and appreciate the great poet of universal nature.

Who was not for an age, but for all time?

* The poets in Dr Johnson's collection were all selected by the booksellers. With the exception of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden, who obtained admittance on the special recommendation of the doctor, as he himself tells us in his *Life of Dr Watts*, Spenser and Shakespeare were excluded.

His edition of the prince of dramatic poets has fallen into deserved oblivion. He did not even understand or admire the more artificial, but yet manly and vigorous Ben Jonson. Spence tells us that Pope thought the greater part of that dramatist's productions 'poor trash.'

But 'rare Ben' himself, though a good poet, was a bad critic. He said of Spenser, that 'his stanzas pleased him not, nor his manner,' and that 'for some things, he esteemed Donne the first poet in the world.' Shakespeare, he thought, 'wanted art, and sometimes sense; and why? because he made a blunder in geography. In the *Winter's Tale* he made Bohemia a maritime country, little dreaming that an error of locality would deduct from the miraculous truth of his delineations of the human heart.'

The melodious Waller saw nothing in Milton, but an old blind schoolmaster, who had written a dull poem, remarkable for nothing but its length; and Milton himself preferred the glittering conceits of Cowley to the manly energy and truth of Dryden, whom he pronounced a good rhymist, but no poet. But Dryden, also, with all his real merit as a poet, was a critic whose decisions are never to be relied on, partly because he was prejudiced, partly because he was, comparatively speaking, deficient in imagination and sensibility, and partly because he was a most unblushing adulator. He thought 'the matchless Orinda,' Catherine Philips, was a great poetess. He pronounced the versification of Spenser inferior to that of Waller. Voltaire, as every Englishman remembers, has spoken of Shakespeare's 'monstrous farces called tragedies,' and wondered that a nation which had produced *Cato* (Addison's collection of cold and stilted dialogues in the dramatic form), should tolerate such plays as *Lea*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Othello*! But if Voltaire has done British genius a gross injustice, he has suffered something in return. Gray declared that Voltaire (except as a writer of plays) was entirely without genius. Neither could he perceive any talent whatever in Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloïse*. He spoke in a similar strain of several British authors. He said that David Hume had continued all his days an infant, but had, unhappily, been taught to read and write. He saw no merit in Thomson's exquisite *Castle of Indolence*; and he thought Collins deficient in imagery! 'He (Collins) deserves,' said he, 'to live some years, but will not.' It would seem that the time has long gone by, when

'The sacred name
Of poet and of prophet was the same.'

Gray, in his verses to the artist who embellished an edition of his poems, very oddly inverts the merits of Pope and Dryden; by speaking of the energy of the first, and the melody of the second.

To the list of bad critics, I am compelled to add the name of Collins, for he has ventured to assert, in his Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer, that Fletcher excelled Shakespeare in the illustration of female tenderness.

'His every strain the smiles and graces own,
But stronger Shakespeare felt for man alone.'

It would be a waste of words to expose this egregious error, though I believe Collins only echoes Dryden. Gifford, in his edition of Massinger, almost repeats them both. He contends that Fletcher is at least as pathetic as Shakespeare. The pathos of *Lea* does not seem to have touched the author of the *Barviad* and *Meviad*, a coarse and savage satire, in which helpless women are insulted, and 'butterflies are broken on a wheel.' But in Gifford's estimation, not only is Fletcher at least Shakespeare's equal in pathos, but Beaumont is as sublime, Ben Jonson as nervous, and Massinger superior in rhythmical modulation. The sole point of unrivalled excellence that he leaves to Shakespeare is his wit!—and yet Gifford was for many years one of our leading critics. We ought not to be surprised that he pronounced Hazlitt a dull-headed blockhead; and that he could discover neither genius nor common sense in Keats

and Shelley. According to Gifford, 'the predominating character of Mr Shelley's poetry is its frequent and total want of meaning.' 'It is not too much to affirm,' he says (in speaking of the Prometheus, &c.), 'that in the whole volume there is not one original image of nature, one simple expression of human feeling, or one new association of the appearances of the moral with those of the material world.'

Anna Seward, a poetess of some note in her time, and still spoken of with respect by Southey, ranked Darwin and Hayley amongst the greatest of our bards. Of the former she thus writes:—'He knew that his verse would live to distant ages; but he also knew that it would survive by the slowly accumulating suffrages of kindred genius when contemporary jealousy had ceased to operate.' How vainly did the poet lay this flattering unction to his soul, and how completely was Anna Seward mistaken in all her sympathetic anticipations of her friend's future fame! Of the feeble and half-forgotten Hayley, she speaks with even greater warmth, and in a style of prophecy which the lapse of a very few years has rendered absolutely ludicrous. 'Hayley is indeed a true poet. He has the fire and energy of Dryden without his absurdity (!), and he has the wit and ease of Prior (!). His beautiful *Epistles on Painting*—far even above these, his *Essay on Epic Poetry*, together with the fine *Ode to Howard*, will be considered as amongst the first Delphic ornaments of the eighteenth century.' But even Cowper thought highly of Hayley and Darwin; and Miss Seward was not a worse critic than the 'true poet,' whose productions are 'amongst the first Delphic ornaments of the eighteenth century.' In one of Hayley's letters to her, in alluding to Burns, he compares him to some obscure and humble versifier who had gained her patronage. 'I admire the Scottish peasant,' says he, 'but I do not think him superior to your poetical carpenter!'

Burns himself had a most extravagant opinion of Fergusson as a poet, whom he preferred to Allan Ramsay. Thomas Warton, though a great admirer of Milton's genius, thought nature had not blessed the divine old bard with an ear for verse. Akenside, who, observes Johnson, upon a poetical question, has a right to be heard, said that 'he would regulate his opinion of the reigning taste by the fate of Dyer's *Fleece*; for if that were ill received, he should not think it any longer reasonable to expect fame from excellence.' The prophesy of some wit, in allusion to this poem, that Dyer would be buried in his own wool, would have been fulfilled almost to the letter, if it were not for his *Groggar Hill*, on which he still breathes the vital air. Scott of Amwell, the Quaker poet, made a desperate attempt to rescue the *Fleece* from oblivion, and vainly endeavoured to persuade the public that it is much superior to the *Groggar Hill*.

Addison, who has been so much praised for his critique on Milton, was, after all, but another example of the fallibility of poetical critics. In his versified 'Account of the greatest English Poets,' he omits all allusion to Shakespeare, but praises Roscommon as 'the best of critics and of poets too!' After having taken due notice of numerous 'great' poets, he recollects that 'justice demands one labour more'—

'The noble Montague remains unnamed.'

That Shakespeare was unnamed, was of little consequence! But though the critic and poet was, as he elegantly expresses himself,

'Tired with rhyming, and would fain give o'er,'

he would have deemed himself highly blameworthy had he omitted Montague! His list of great poets would have been deplorably incomplete! Though he is so enraptured with Montague, he says little in favour of Chaucer or Spenser. Of the former he observes,

'In vain he jeers in his unspotted strain,'

and of the latter he tells us, that though his tales

'amused a barbarous age' (the age of Shakspeare, Bacon, Jeremy Taylor, Beaumont and Fletcher, &c. &c.),

'An age as yet uncultivate and rude,'

that he is no longer to be tolerated—

'But now the mystic tale that charmed of yore
Can charm an understanding age no more.'

Amongst the poets of the nineteenth century, we have a melancholy display of bad critics upon productions in their own art. Byron called Spenser 'a dull fellow,' and said, 'he could see nothing in him.*' He considered that Chaucer was 'contemptible,' and owed his celebrity merely to his antiquity, and that he was inferior to Pierce Plowman and Thomas of Erildoune. He placed Rogers at the head of all his contemporaries, and looked, or pretended to look, with supreme scorn upon Southey and Wordsworth. He thus spoke of the most ambitious of the latter's undertakings:—

'A clumsy, frowzy poem called the *Excursion*,
Writ in a manner that is my aversion.'

He said Cowper was 'no poet,' and intimated that Pope was at least equal if not superior to Shakspeare, for whom he had no very passionate admiration. He thought the author of the *Essay on Man* was the greatest of poets, because the science of morals is the greatest of all subjects; though he contradicted himself by an equally foolish position, that a poet ranks by his execution alone, and not by the nature of his subject or undertaking; so that the author of a good epigram must be equal in rank to the author of a good epic, which Dryden calls the greatest work of which the mind of man is capable. Young's *Revenge* was Byron's favourite play, though he had read *Othello*.

Wordsworth calls Dryden's celebrated music ode 'a drunken song,' and professes to entertain a profound contempt for some of the finest poetry of Burns. The celebrated Dr Wolcott (Peter Pindar) used to speak in the same style of Dryden's ode. 'How wofully,' he would often exclaim, 'have mankind been mistaken in their admiration of this paltry production!' Mrs Hemans, in one of her letters (published in Chorley's *Memoirs* of her), records the following very remarkable conversation between herself and the great poet of the lakes:—'We were sitting on a bank (she writes) overlooking Rydal Lake, and speaking of Burns. I said, "Mr Wordsworth, do you not think his war ode, "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled," has been a good deal overrated, especially by Mr Carlyle, who calls it the noblest lyric in the language?" "I am delighted to hear you ask the question," was his reply; "overrated?—trash!—stuff!—miserable inanity! without a thought—without an image!" &c. &c. Then he recited the piece in a tone of unutterable scorn, and concluded with a *da capo* of "wretched stuff!"'

Wordsworth and Coleridge see no beauty in Gray's *Elegy*, though the latter had the most extravagantly favourable opinion of the sentimental poetry of Bowles, and praises it for its 'manliest melancholy.' Keats styled all the poets of the Frenchified English school 'a school of dots.'

'Ye taught a school
Of dots that smooth, inlay, and clip and fit,
Till, like the certain wands of Jacob's wit,
Their verses tailed. Easy was the task.'

Perhaps Keats would not have found the composition of another *Rape of the Lock* quite so easy a task as he

* If Byron ever read Gabriel Harvey's letter to Spenser, in which he discourages him from proceeding with the *Fairy Queen*, he must have been delighted with such congeniality of taste. Harvey was a man of great learning and elegant accomplishments, and wrote verses which were well thought of by Spenser himself and other good judges of poetical merit. Spenser sent Harvey a specimen of the *Fairy Queen* for his opinion, and his 'most special friend' returned it with a prayer that 'God or some good angel would put him in a better mind.' This condemnation of Spenser's noblest work is accompanied with high praises of some of his inferior productions.

imagined. There is even in the *Essay on Man*, and the *Prologue to Cato*, something more than

'A piling infant's force;
That swayed about upon a rocking-horse;
And thought it Pegasus.'

Sir Walter Scott, though he exhibited a noble impartiality and a rare self-insight when speaking of his own poems, was not a first-rate judge of the poetry of other men. 'He often said to me,' says his friend Ballantyne, 'that neither his own nor any modern popular style of composition, was that from which he derived most pleasure. I asked him what it was; he answered:—(what does the reader suppose? Shakspeare's, Spenser's, Milton's, Dryden's, Pope's, Burns's? Oh no!)—Dr Johnson's (!), and that he had more pleasure in reading *London*, and *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, than any other poetical composition he could mention.' Scott, however, is the only poet I have read of who judged fairly and yet unfavourably of his own poetical compositions. He always said that they could never live; and were not to be compared with the works of many of his contemporaries. In the meridian of his own poetical popularity, he felt that those comparatively neglected writers, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley, were far greater poets, and more deeply touched with the holy fire of inspiration. Nor did Scott ever prefer his worst pieces to his best. In this respect he exhibited a far clearer judgment than many other celebrated authors. Petrarch doted on his *Africa*, Milton on his *Paradise Regained*, Prior on his *Solomon*, and Byron on his *Hints from Horace*.

I have now, I think, sufficiently established my position, that good poets are not always good critics, and that we ought not to trust too implicitly to their authority on a question of poetical criticism.*

INFLUENCE OF AIR AND EXERCISE ON HEALTH.

In proof of the influence which even temporary physical education exerts upon the human frame and its stamina, may be mentioned the following example:—In the summer of 1839, we had an opportunity of witnessing one of the trial races of Oerstroff, at that time one of the swiftest runners in England. On the occasion we speak of, he ran 120 yards in eleven seconds; his pulse, just before starting, beat 61 strokes per minute, and at the termination of his extraordinary feat it beat only 94! When it is further taken into account, that, whilst in the act of running, he never made a complete inspiration or expiration, the performance can be considered little short of wonderful. We were informed by the man himself, that though he was naturally remarkable for nimble-footedness, he was anything but 'good-winded.' Two months previously, he had been taken from a stocking-frame, and, by a process of merely careful training, was brought into the state of bodily condition alluded to. Had it been possible for him, before commencing to train, to have run the distance in the time stated, the effort, if it had not killed, would have nearly asphyxiated him. He would have been breathing for his life, and his pulse could not have been counted. As it was, at the completion of his task he breathed without difficulty, and his pulse was increased only 33 beats per minute! After such evidence as this, and it is only one of a multitude of examples with which the world is familiar, no man, not actually diseased, need despair of becoming active and vigorous, if he will only attend to the simple rules which are to guide his physical discipline. The man of whom we have spoken had not a good chest, for which reason he could not, under any circumstances, have run a long race; and his configuration of thorax was even opposed to an effort of speed for a short distance; but the natural obstacle was overcome for the time being by temporary training! We are, perhaps, not justified in saying *ex uno disce omnes*; but at least we can say, that if two short months of rigid living, and exercise in pure air, can do so much for a man's constitution and strength, how much more permanent service may be done by a continued observance, though in

* The above is presented, with the concurrence of the author, as the spirit of a paper in the 'Literary Leaves' of David Leslie Richardson.

a milder degree, of the principles we have laid down. How many listless and enfeebled frames would be roused, refreshed, and made fit for the wear and tear of a protracted life! How many minds, sinking into imbecility from actual lassitude, or oppressed by the melancholy of fancied cares, would be stirred by the busy and cheerful objects of worldly enterprise! We would fain teach the man too ardently devoted to learning, to science, or to worldly business, that with all his toil, and care, and penury of time, he is not a gainer; he may appropriate to his idol object an hour that should be sacred to his own service, and in so doing he is a loser of twain; let him husband his moments as niggardly as he will, there is a certain reckoning which he must daily have with himself, a certain time for his own rest and refreshment; and if that time be not granted, it becomes no matter of idle debtorship—day after day registers a fresh account against him, and, at the end of a few years, the unsuspected fact of premature old age is announced by decrepitude, decay, and death.—*Medical Times.*

QUEEN ELIZABETH'S LAST ILLNESS.

The Archbishop of Canterbury and Cecil intreated her to receive medical aid; but she angrily told them, 'that she knew her own constitution better than they did, and that she was not in so much danger as they imagined.' The admiral came and knelt beside her, where she sat among her cushions, sullen and unresponsive; he kissed her hands, and, with tears, implored her to take a little nourishment. After much ado, he prevailed so far, that she received a little broth from his hands, he feeding her with a spoon. But when he urged her to go to bed, she angrily refused, and then, in wild and wandering words, hinted of phantasms that had troubled her midnight couch. 'If he were in the habit of seeing such things in his bed,' she said, 'as she did when in hers, he would not persuade her to go there.' Secretary Cecil overhearing this speech, asked 'if her majesty had seen any spirits?' A flash of Elizabeth's mighty mind for an instant triumphed over the wreck of her bodily and mental faculties; she knew the man, and was aware he had been truckling with her successor. He was not in her confidence, and she answered majestically, 'she scorned to answer him such a question!' But Cecil's pertinacity was not subdued by the lion-like mien of dying majesty, and he told her that, 'to content the people, she must go to bed.' At which she smiled, wonderfully condescending to him, observing, 'the word *must* was not to be used to princes,' adding, 'Little man, little man, if your father had lived, ye durst not have said so much; but ye know I must die, and that makes ye so presumptuous.' She then commanded him and the rest to depart out of her chamber, all but Lord Admiral Howard, to whom, as her near relation and fast friend through life, she was confidential to the last, even regarding those unreal phantasms, which, when her great mind awoke for a moment, it is plain she referred to their proper causes. When Cecil and his colleagues were gone, the queen, shaking her head piteously, said to her brave kinsman, 'My lord, I am tied with a chain of iron about my neck.' The lord admiral reminded her of her wonted courage; but she replied despondingly, 'I am tied, I am tied, and the case is altered with me.' The queen understood that Secretary Cecil had given forth to the people that she was mad; therefore, in her sickness, she did many times say unto him, 'Cecil, I am not mad; you must not think to make Queen Jane of me.' She evidently alluded to the unfortunate queen-regnant of Castile, the mad Joanna, mother of Charles V., whose sad life, as a regal maniac, was fresh in the memory of her dying contemporary.—*Agnes Strickland's Lives of the Queens of England.*

PERIODICAL PUBLISHED IN A LUNATIC ASYLUM.

What a strange contrast does the following statement, by the New York Journal of Medicine, present to the state of things formerly existing in similar establishments! 'It is in the Vermont Asylum that the literary spirit has been carried even to the *casothes scribendi*; for, not content with the enjoyment of being merely readers, they actually publish a small newspaper called the "Asylum Journal." As they thus receive in exchange more than two hundred newspapers, besides many other periodicals, the superintendent is enabled to furnish every patient with a newspaper from his own immediate neighbourhood, at the same time that every politician has one of his own political views, and every sectarian one adapted to his own religious senti-

ments.' We see it also stated by some of the medical journals of our own country, that very successful results have attended a similar undertaking in the Crichton Asylum, Dumfriesshire.

TO A BUTTERFLY IN THE CITY.

[BY A. W. PARTRIDGE.]

FEEBLE flutterer, timid thing,
Wherefore here with trembling wing?
Crowded streets can never be,
Foolish rambler, fit for thee.
Art thou tired of leafy bowers,
Sunny streams, and honied flowers;
Is the rose, thy perfumed bed,
Tempest-snapped, untimely dead;
Or, still worse, thy love unkind,
That thou leav'st the fields behind,
Here unwisely come to roam
Far from beauty, peace, and homo?

Or, by travelled friend impressed,
Art thou come with curious breast?
Wouldst thou see the domes and towers
In this crowded coop of ours?
Or survey, with eager eyes,
Creatures so divinely wise?
Fly, ah! fly these swarming streets,
Seek again thy green retreats;
For, though wonders here you see,
Joy and quiet dwell with thee.

But with kinder aim, no doubt,
Thou hast come to seek us out;
Thou didst fear, so hard we toil
In the dust of care and toil,
We might be all out of tune
For the flowery joys of June,
And, with ledger-blinded eye,
Let unseen thy beauties die.
Ah! thy fear was wise; we strive,
Tugging in this human hive,
Too intent on gains and losses
In life's game of 'noughts and crosses';
While fair nature's volume lies
All unread before our eyes,
Deadened in our every sense
To her holy influence.

But return; 'tis far from men
Seek thy sunny haunts again,
And we too, ere long, will come
To thy quiet leafy home.
There we'll seek the thyme-bank sunny
Where the flower-thief pilfers honey,
There we'll rove with dance and song
Where the carp darts swift along,
Or beneath some honied lime
Leaf-embowered, laugh at time.
Thus the happy hours shall be
Fraught with love and liberty;
Thus thy home and joys we'll share,
Far from toil, and noise, and care.

NOTE.

In the article entitled *Railway Literature*, published on the 29d March (No. 64, New Series), an omission appears to have been made with respect to the share which the Scotsman (Edinburgh newspaper) had in promoting the trial of a high rate of speed upon railways. The same omission, it may be remarked, occurs in an article on railways in the Quarterly Review for June 1844 (p. 233). We now learn from an article in the Scotsman, that the editor of that paper, having engaged in researches into the laws of friction established by Vince and Coulomb, published the results in a series of articles in his journal in 1824, showing how twenty miles an hour was, on theoretic grounds, within the limits of possibility; and it was to his writings on this point, and not to anything that had fallen from Mr George Stephenson, that Mr Nicolas Wood alluded when he spoke of the 'ridiculous expectation' that engines would ever travel at the rate of twenty or even twelve miles an hour.

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